

REMARKS

Applicants submit that the amended claims are novel and not obvious in view of the prior art relied upon by the Office in the Office Action of July 19, 2006. For example, the prior art relied upon by the Office may disclose compositions containing polyfunctional aziridine compounds and 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane. However, the prior art compositions also contain one or more additional reagents that affect the characteristics of the prior art composition.

Heederik (WO 02/062894) discloses top coat compositions and coatings made therefrom (see the Title of Heederik). The compositions of Heederik contain (i) at least one binder and (ii) at least one filler (see the Abstract of Heederik). The binders of Heederik are described on pages 3-23 and include polymeric materials such as polyurethanes, thermoplastic polymers, polyesters, polyamides, polyvinyl alcohols etc. (see page 3, lines 4-6 of Heederik). Fillers are described beginning at page 23 of Heederik and include materials such as silica.

The fillers and/or binders of Heederik are excluded from the present claims, i.e., because the present claims have the transitional phrase “consisting of”. Applicants submit that the presently claimed invention is not obvious in view of Heederik at least because the presently claimed invention excludes the compositions of Heederik.

With respect to Garcia '566 (U.S. 6,465,566), the cited prior art discloses anionic polyurethane dispersions containing polyfluorooxetanes (see the Title of Garcia '566). And are described to contain at least a polyurethane (see the Abstract of Garcia '566). As stated above for the Heederik prior art, Applicants submit that the present claims are not obvious in view of Garcia '566 because the present claims exclude the compositions of Garcia which must contain at least a polyurethane-type material.

The same reasoning applies to the Garcia '540 patent (U.S. 6,436,540). The Abstract of Garcia '540 states that the prior art compositions include a polyurethane-polyvinylester mixture. The “consisting of” transitional language of the present claims excludes such materials from the claimed composition. Thus, as is the case for the Heederik and Garcia '540 prior art, Applicants submit that the presently claimed invention is not obvious in view of Garcia '540.

During a discussion with Examiner Khan and the Examiner’s SPE on September 14, 2006, the Examiner agreed that the amended claims are patentable over the prior art of record, pending an updated search.

With regard to the non-obviousness of the presently claimed invention, Applicants draw the Office’s attention to the examples of the specification. Several inventive and comparative compositions are disclosed on page 6 of the present specification. The compositions which adhere to the present claim limitations (i.e., compositions A1 and A2 on page 6 of the present specification) are shown to have improved stability of viscosity and water dilutability.

The table on page 7 of the specification provides the viscosity and water dilutability characteristics of the examples and comparative examples. It is readily obvious from the data in the Table on page 7 of the specification that the claimed invention (e.g., examples A1 and A2) is able to provide a lower and more stable viscosity in comparison to the comparative examples (i.e., Examples B, C, D, and E). In fact, the viscosity for Comparative Example E which contains a polyfunctional aziridine and tetramethylethylenediamine is substantially higher than the highest viscosity of the inventive examples and, at elevated temperature, the viscosity increases to a greater degree. This is not the case for the inventive examples which have a much lower and more stable initial viscosity and lower rate of viscosity change.

Likewise, the water dilutability of the inventive examples is substantially better than the water dilutability of Comparative Example E.

Applicants thus submit that compositions that contain only those components recited in the present claims provide superior performance in comparison to the Comparative Examples disclosed in the specification which contain other materials not recited in the present claims and otherwise exclude from the claimed invention by the transitional phrase "consisting of".

Applicants submit that none of the prior art relied upon by the Office suggests to those of ordinary skill in the art that compositions which contain only those components recited in the present claims. In fact, all of the prior art publications relied upon by the Office make it clear that one or more additional components is necessary in the prior art compositions. For example, each of Heederik, Garcia '540 and Garcia '566 require the presence of a polymeric material such as a binder, a polyurethane or polyurethane/polyvinylester mixture. Applicants submit that those of ordinary skill in the art would have no motivation to leave out such components from the prior art compositions in view of the fact that these components are identified as essential components of the prior art compositions.

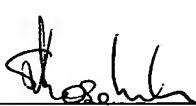
Applicants submit that the amended claims are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Respectfully submitted,

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